

concern and the need to find cooperative solutions to these issues. One concrete example of this cooperative approach is an expansion in the number of Integrated Border Enforcement Teams (IBETS) from the current 3 teams at key locations along the border. IBETS are bilateral teams made up of officers from agencies and departments from both sides of the border who work together on security issues of concern to both countries.

In order to communicate the Government's work on cooperative border management to Canadians, the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade has been working with other departments and the Privy Council Office to hold a variety of outreach events around the country. Progress on the Action Plan has been discussed with Canadian border stakeholders. An outreach briefing and question and answer period was held for stakeholders in Vancouver on March 1, 2002, attended by approximately 50 representatives of the B.C. private sector, associations, labour, the provincial government and various local municipal governments. Similar events with regional stakeholders took place in Ottawa on March 11 and in Montreal on April 8. There are plans for a similar event in Halifax in May.

Extensive information on the Smart Border Declaration and the objectives of the Canadian Government in pursuing the Action Plan are available to Canadians via the internet on the Canada-U.S. relations website at <http://www.can-am.gc.ca>.

Recommendation 3

That the Government of Canada seek the commitment of the U.S. for a high-level "summit" of senior American and Canadian political leaders and officials to discuss border management issues. On the basis of these meetings, Canada and the U.S. should jointly undertake to develop and make public a revitalized bilateral border management plan that would render more efficient the cross-border flow of goods and services.

Bilateral meetings on border management issues are ongoing with the aim of ensuring that the flow of goods and services across the border continues uninterrupted. Prime Minister Chrétien and President Bush have discussed the border on several occasions, most recently during their meeting on March 14, 2002. In addition, the meeting on December 12, 2002, between Deputy Prime Minister Manley and Homeland Security Director Ridge led to the Smart Border Declaration and the associated 30 point Action Plan:

DPM Manley and Director Ridge have met on two occasions since December 12, and discuss border management issues on a regular basis. In addition to these high level meetings, senior government officials are in touch with their U.S. counterparts on these issues, and bilateral working groups are meeting to give effect to the Action Plan. Three large scale meetings have recently been held: the Border Vision Plenary Meeting in Quebec, the Shared Border Accord Meetings in Florida and a joint Border Vision and Accord meeting in Vancouver. Additional high level meetings will continue as work on the Action Plan progresses.